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# A Wishing Well

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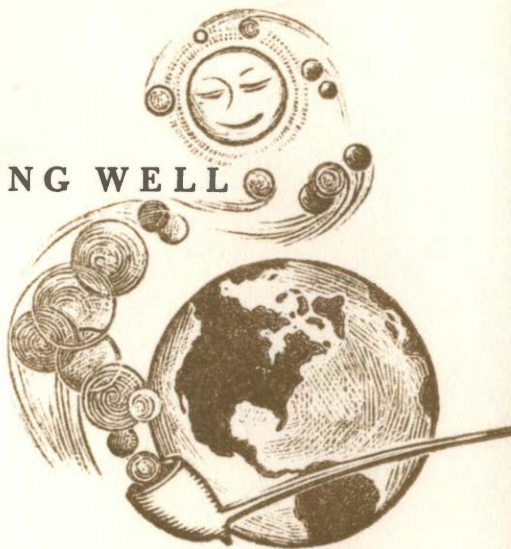
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A-WISHING WELL



**A-Wishing Well by Robert Frost**

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AT CHRISTMAS 1959

THIS NEW POEM BRINGS YOU

WARM HOLIDAY GREETINGS AND

THE BEST OF WISHES FOR THE

NEW YEAR FROM

ROBERT FROST



**A** poet would a-wishing go,  
And he wished love were thus and so.  
“If but it were” he said, said he,  
“And one thing more that may not be,  
This world were good enough for me.”  
I quote him with respect verbatim.  
Some quaint dissatisfaction ate him.  
I would give anything to learn  
The one thing more of his concern.  
But listen to me register  
The one thing more I wish there were.  
As a confirmed astronomer  
I’m always for a better sky.  
(I don’t care how the world gets by.)  
I’m tempted to let go restraint  
Like splashing phosphorescent paint,



And fill the sky as full of moons  
As circus day of toy balloons.  
That ought to make the Sunday Press.  
But that's not like me. On much less  
And much much easier to get  
From childhood has my heart been set.  
Some planets, the unblinking four,  
Are seen to juggle moons galore.  
A lot would be a lot of fun.  
But all I ask's an extra one.  
Let's get my incantation right:  
"I wish I may I wish I might"  
Give earth another satellite.  
Where would we get another? Come,  
Don't you know where new moons are from?

When clever people ask me where  
I get a poem, I despair.  
I'm apt to tell them in New York  
I think I get it via stork  
From some extinct old chimney pot.  
Believe the Arcadians or not,  
They claim they recollect the morn  
When unto Earth her first was born.  
It cost the Earth as fierce a pang  
As Keats (or was it Milton?) sang  
It cost her for Enormous Caf.  
It came near splitting her in half.  
'Twas torn from her Pacific side.  
All the sea water in one tide  
And all the air rushed to the spot.  
Believe the Arcadians or not,  
They saved themselves by hanging on  
To a plant called the silphion,



Which has for its great attribute  
It can't be pulled up by the root.  
Men's legs and bodies in the gale  
Streamed out like pennants swallow-tail.  
Most of them let go and were gone.  
But there was this phenomenon:  
Some of them gave way at the wrist  
Before they gave way at the fist.  
In branches of the silphion  
Is sometimes found a skeleton  
Of desperately clutching hand  
Science has failed to understand.  
One has been lately all the talk  
In the museum of Antioch.  
That's how it was from the Pacific.  
It needn't be quite so terrific  
To get another from the Atlantic.  
It needn't be quite so gigantic

As coming from a lesser ocean.  
Good liberals will object my notion  
Is too hard on the human race.  
That's something I'm prepared to face.  
It merely would entail the purge  
That the just pausing Demiurge  
Asks of himself once in so often  
So the firm firmament won't soften.  
I am assured at any rate  
Man's practically inexterminate.  
Someday I must go into that.  
There's always been an Ararat  
Where someone else begat  
To start the world all over at.



**Wood engavings by Thomas W. Nason**



**Printed at the Spiral Press, New York**

